

SAFETY ALERT

The Army Safety Center has noted 20 convoy accidents since FY 98 caused by leaders failing to properly perform their duties as the commander of a vehicle movement as required in FM 55-30. This includes failure to control the group's movement, failure to ensure that vehicles maintain a proper march speed, and failure to properly mark the unit's vehicles.

The convoy commander is responsible for the safe movement of the convoy. To do this, he/she must be capable of positively controlling the convoy's movement. This can be done through the use of communications equipment among the vehicles, ensuring each vehicle has a properly trained, equipped and supervised crew, and leading from the front in the absence of radios or other means of controlling the march. Control of the movement includes enforcing speed limits, march intervals, crew uniform and seat belt usage. It also requires the ability to stop the march if an unexpected hazard is encountered along the route.

Preparing vehicles and soldiers for the movement is a leader responsibility. Indications are that inexperienced soldiers, personnel turbulence and ever increasing training requirements have caused some units to become complacent in managing the risks associated with vehicle movements. In accordance with the risk management process, as outlined in FM 100-14, leaders must identify the hazards associated with the mission, and develop, implement, assess and supervise control measures to mitigate those risks. These control measures include marking the vehicles IAW local SOPs, briefing crews on hazardous conditions expected along the route, pre-combat checks of personnel and equipment, and developing pre-accident emergency contingency plans.

Unit SOPs should address leader responsibilities during movements of any number of vehicles and identify means to implement common control measures such as those defined in this message. Commanders must ensure that assigned leaders of any size military convoy are aware of their responsibilities and perform their duties to ensure the safe execution of the unit's mission. Leadership saves lives!

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